



WELCOME

PROTECTING COLLEGIATE OLYMPIC SPORTS

— An Interactive Session on What Comes Next —

JUNE 10, 2025 | NACDA CONVENTION | ORLANDO, FLORIDA



Knight Commission
On Intercollegiate Athletics

A PROJECT OF THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION



AMY PRIVETTE PERKO
CEO,
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BOB BOWLSBY

**Member,
Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics**
Former D-I Commissioner & Director of Athletics
**Former Member of Board of Directors,
U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee**



BETH BROOKE

**Member,
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Global Business & Policy Executive
**Member of Board of Directors,
U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee**



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Agenda

- I. Session Overview
- II. Statement of the Problem/Consensus on Challenges
- III. Stakeholder Proposed Solutions
- IV. Knight Commission Incentive Proposals
- V. Poll results



JASON HUSSER

Director, Elon University Poll



ELON
UNIVERSITY

Elon University
Poll

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Primary Concerns for Collegiate Olympic Sports

1. Reductions in funding and/or the loss of sports teams
 - a. **37 DI teams** have been dropped since the *House* settlement was announced
 - b. More than **700 lost opportunities**
2. Reduction of opportunities through roster limits across all of Division I = **15,000+ fewer opportunities** once the phasing in of roster limits has expired
3. Future changes requiring fewer minimum number of sports for DI membership



Questions that could impact TEAM USA

- How will the scholarship and investment levels impact TEAM USA success?
- How could reductions in broad-based participation impact each sport over the long term?

Information from the May 20 Session:
“The Future of Collegiate Olympic Sports in a New Era
for Division I”

available on knightcommission.org



2024 US Olympic and Paralympic Collegiate Participation



- **593 US Olympic athletes**
 - 75% are current or former college student-athletes
 - Representing 172 institutions and 45 conferences
- **225 US Paralympic athletes**
 - 53% are current or former college student-athletes
 - Representing 94 institutions and 45 conferences
- **84% of all US Olympic medalists in Paris competed in college sports**



DI Core Value: Providing Broad-Based Opportunities

- **227** Division I public institutions
- Providing more than **\$1 billion** in athletics scholarship funding
- Including funding for private institutions, this total is estimated at close to **\$2 billion**
- In 2024, more than **152,000 DI athletes** participated in college sports other than football and men's and women's basketball.



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Proposed solutions fall into four categories:

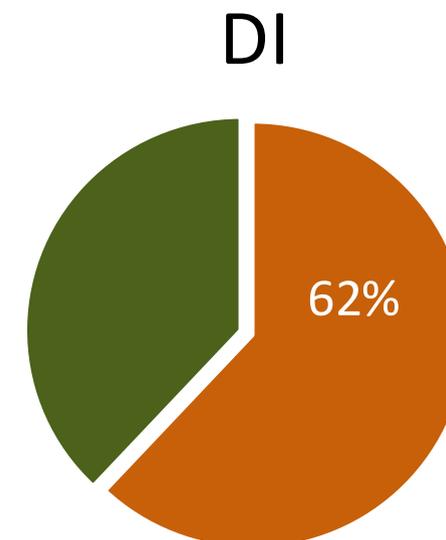
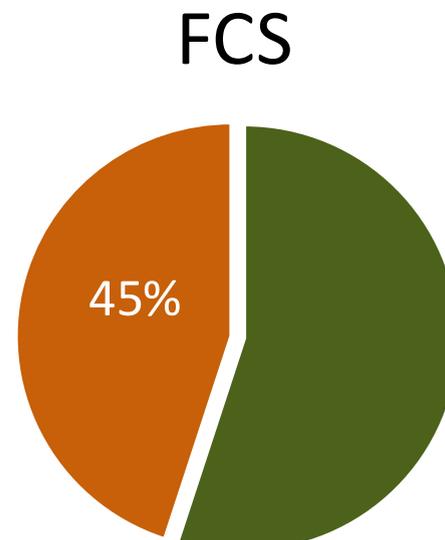
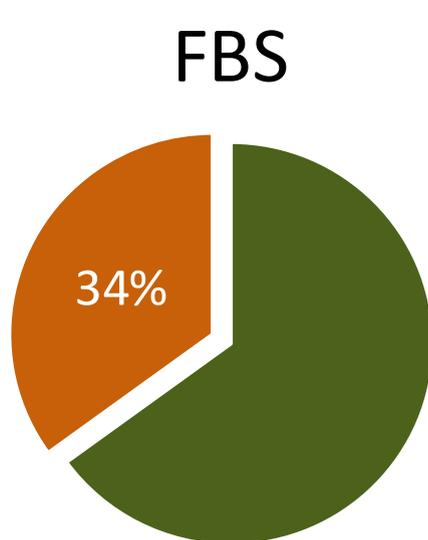
- Increasing awareness and education on the role of collegiate Olympic sports – youth to the Olympic podium
- Protecting current levels of support and avoiding significant cuts
- Creating cost certainty
- Enhancing revenue

Proposal 1

Intercollegiate Coalition of Coaching Associations (ICAC)

Codify through any future federal law a requirement to maintain the proportion of current spending on operational costs for sports other than football and men's and women's basketball.

Operational costs spent on sports other than football and basketball



Proposal 2

Intercollegiate Coalition of Coaching Associations (ICAC)

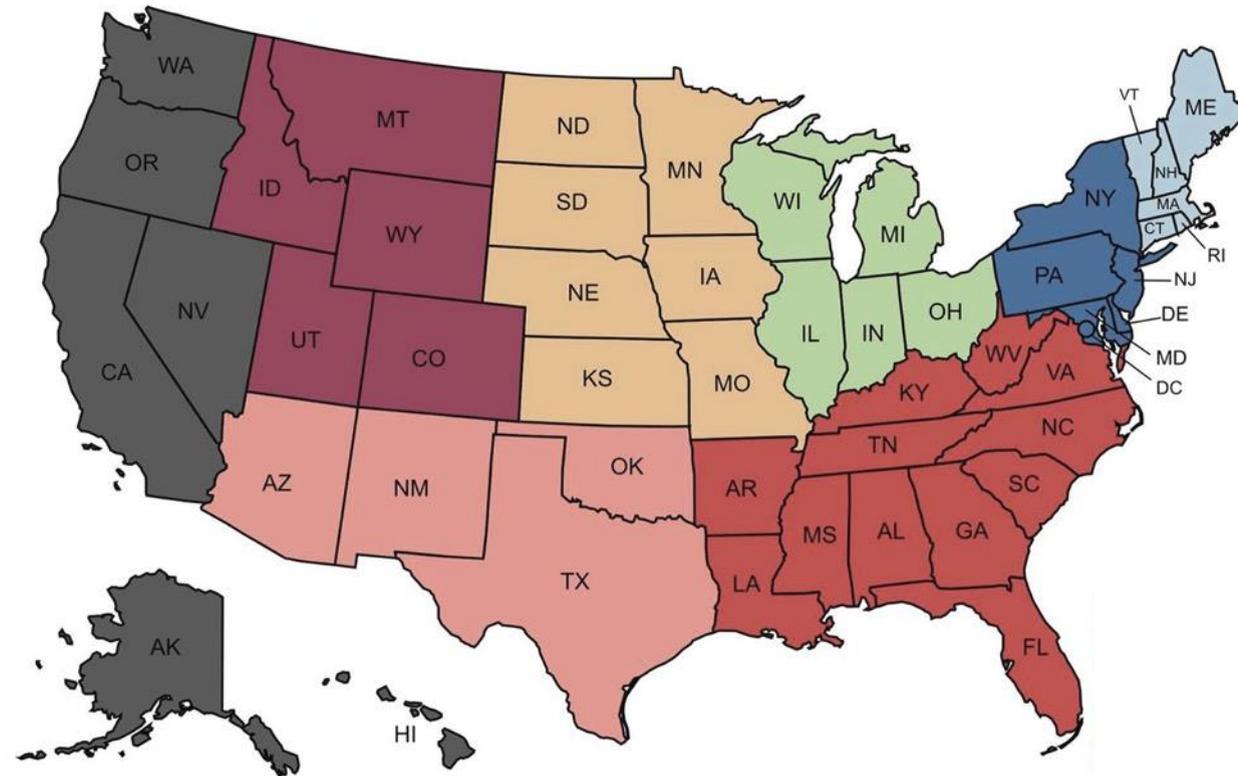
Through federal law, codify the current minimum number of sports required for NCAA Division I membership:

FBS Institutions: ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● 16 sports

Non-FBS Institutions: ●●●●●●●●●●●●●● 14 sports

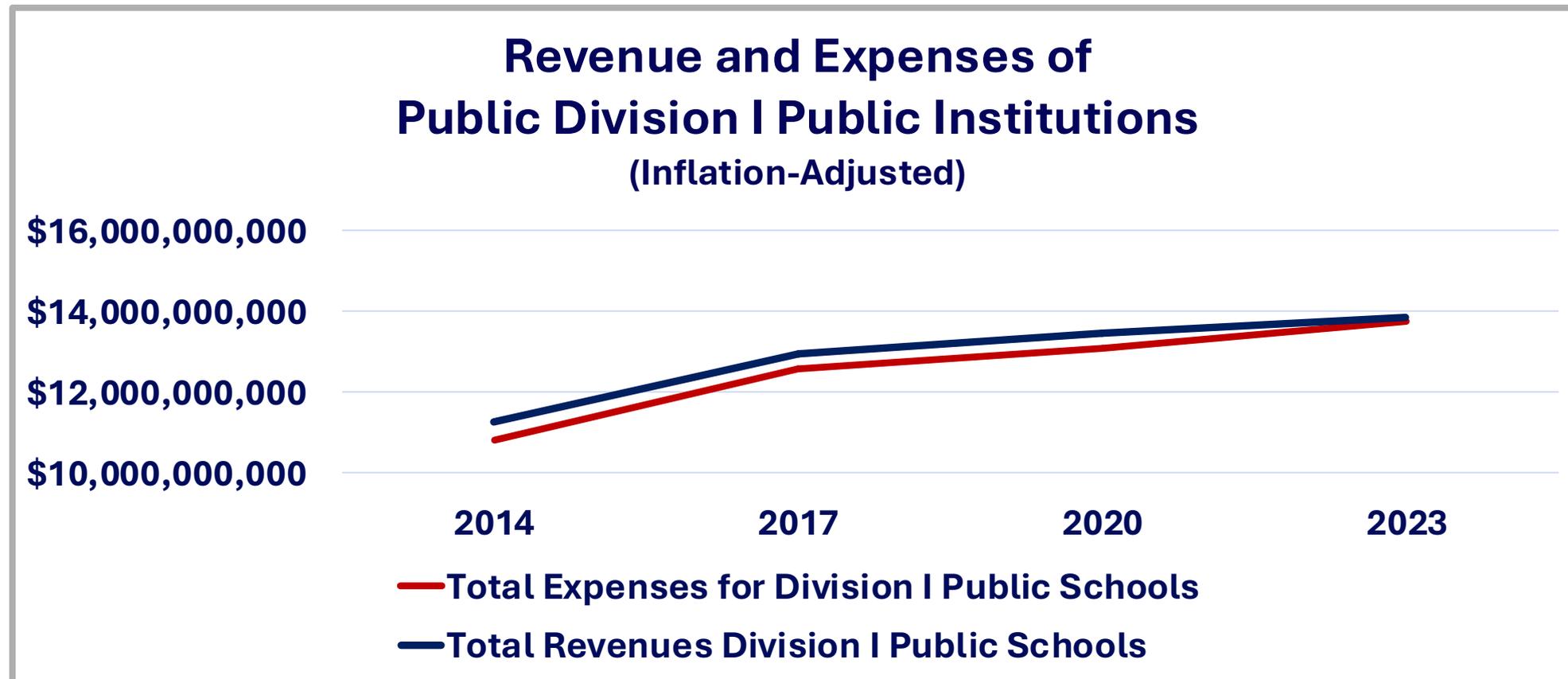
Proposal 3

Find creative ways for multisport conferences to regionalize regular-season competition for collegiate Olympic sports to contain costs.



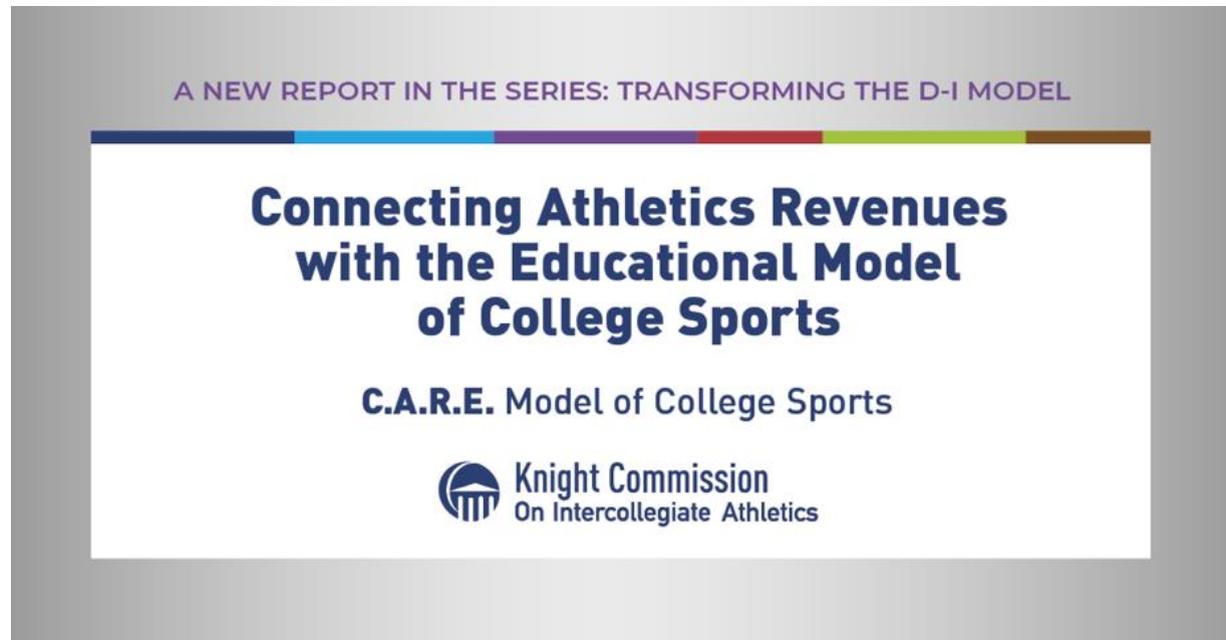
Proposal 4

Find legal ways to create cost control measures.





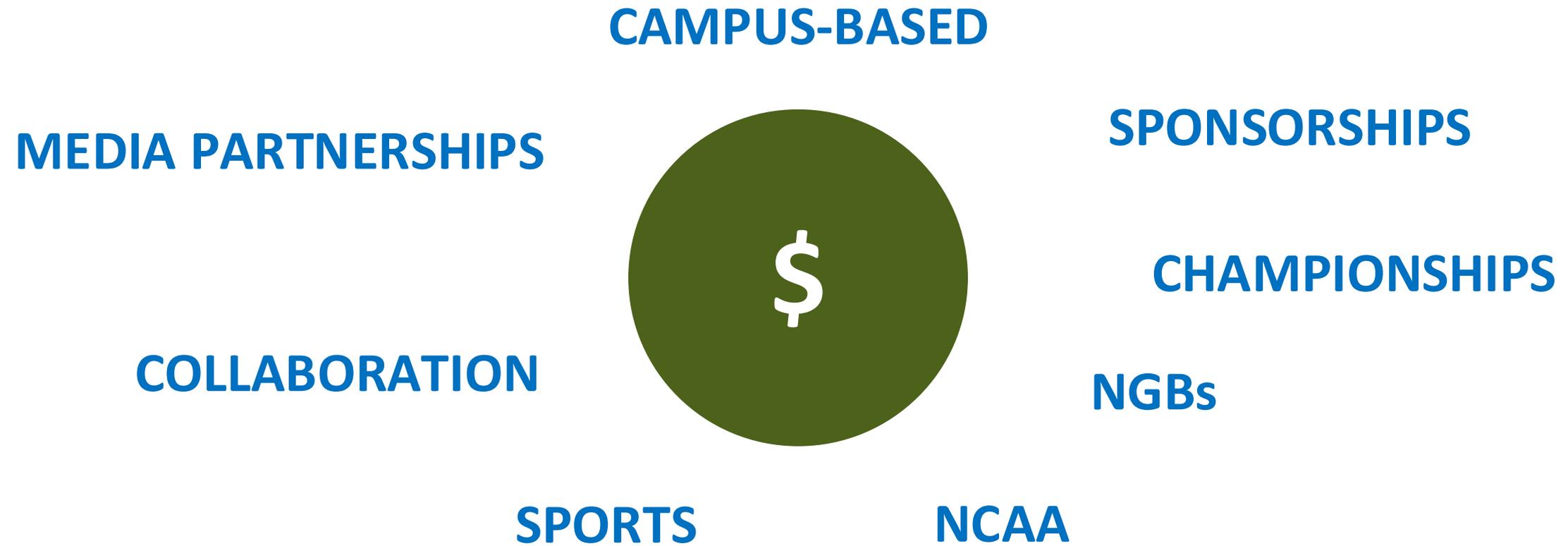
Principles to Impact Financial Framework Distribution Incentives and Spending



Criteria include:

- **Incentives for Core Values of Education, Gender Equity, and Opportunity**
- **Financial Responsibility for Education, Health, Safety, and Well-Being**





Proposal 6

**Sports Historian and Associate Professor
Victoria Jackson**

Create a national fund to support collegiate Olympic Sports through existing or increased fees/federal tax on sports gambling operators.

0.25% current
federal excise tax on
sports gambling with no
designated purpose

\$370 million
collected in 2024
(estimated)



Knight Commission Proposals for Opportunity Incentives



Understanding Current National DI Shared Revenues



Managed by NCAA
(DI member schools and conferences)

Distributes more than **\$600 Million** annually to
356 DI schools;

Other March Madness revenues (nearly \$400m)
fund all national services including FBS Football
and 90 national championships for all 3 divisions



Managed independently by
Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) Conferences

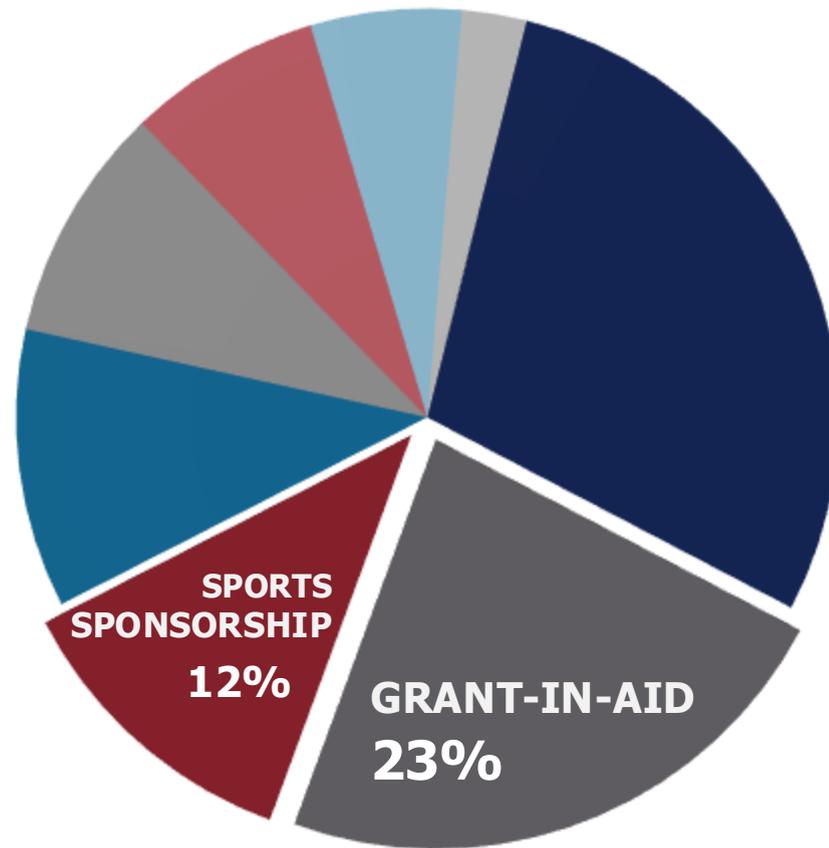
Will distribute more than **\$1 Billion** annually to
DI FBS schools (91% to 67 schools in ACC, Big
10, Big 12, SEC and Notre Dame)*

NCAA receives \$0 in funding from the sport of
FBS Football and absorbs significant national
operations costs for FBS Football



Eliminate FBS Football Factors from NCAA Revenue Distribution Formula

NCAA[®]



Current:

The NCAA revenue distribution formula counts sports for which the NCAA operates and controls revenues associated with a post-season championship. The NCAA counts FBS football in its formula but neither operates nor controls revenues from the College Football Playoff (CFP).

Proposed:

The NCAA revenue distribution formula should be changed to count ONLY NCAA Championship-related sports; **the formula should no longer count FBS football.**



Eliminate FBS Football Factors from NCAA Revenue Distribution Formula

- Incentives for FBS football scholarships and counting the sport itself was estimated between **\$61 and \$66 million***
- **Proposal Result:** Value of financial incentives for sports other than FBS football (“collegiate Olympic sports”) increases by **more than \$60 million annually.**

*based on independent study by CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) using 2018 distributions



Create Opportunity Incentives in the CFP Distribution

Similar to the NCAA distribution, the CFP distribution should include “opportunity incentives” that reward FBS schools only for the athletics scholarships they provide in all sports.

Knight Commission Incentives Proposal #2: Future NCAA and CFP Annual Distributions



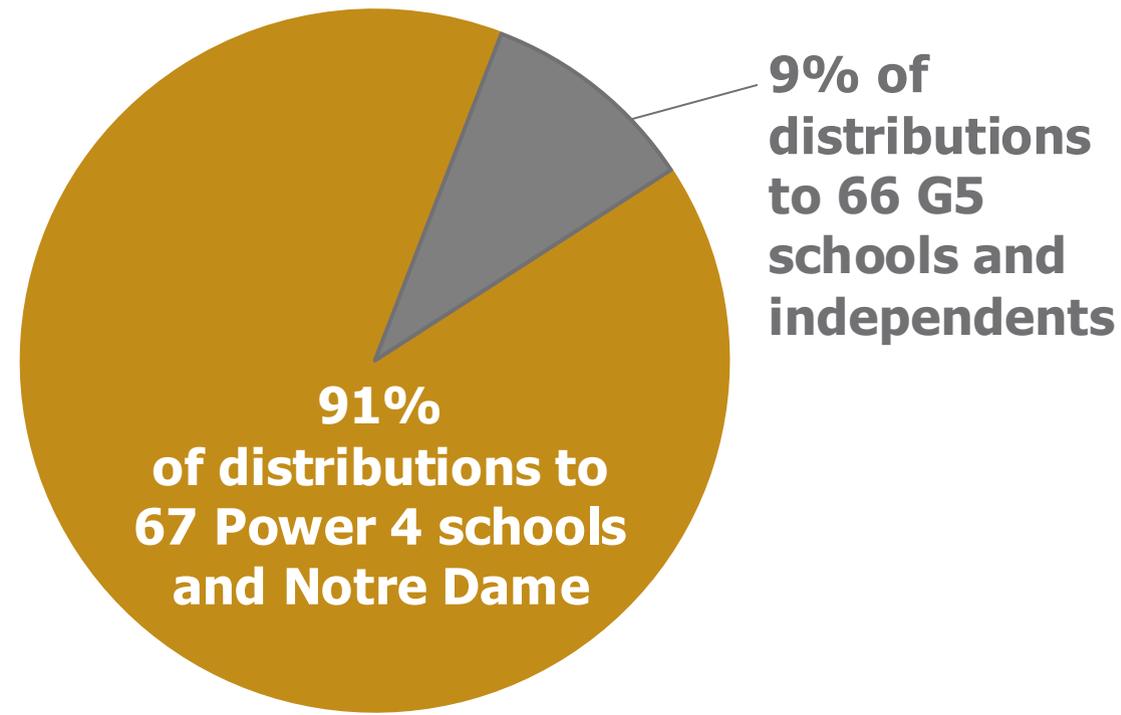
\$1.4 Billion in revenue

**\$737 million
scheduled for
distribution to
356 DI schools***

***Distributions to DI schools will decrease
with plan to pay *House* damages**

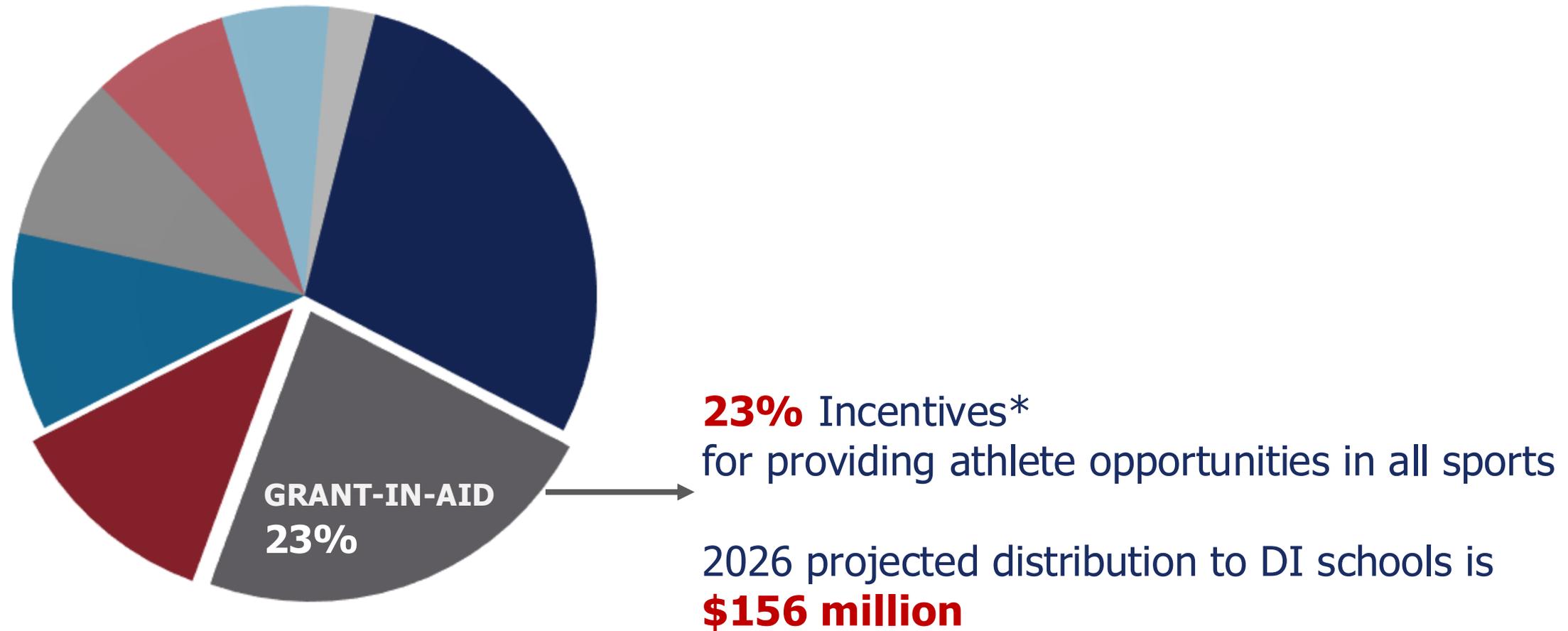


Estimated \$1.3 Billion in revenue



(per contracts and policies effective 2026-27)

Knight Commission Incentives Proposal #2: Athlete Opportunity Incentives under 2026-27 Policy



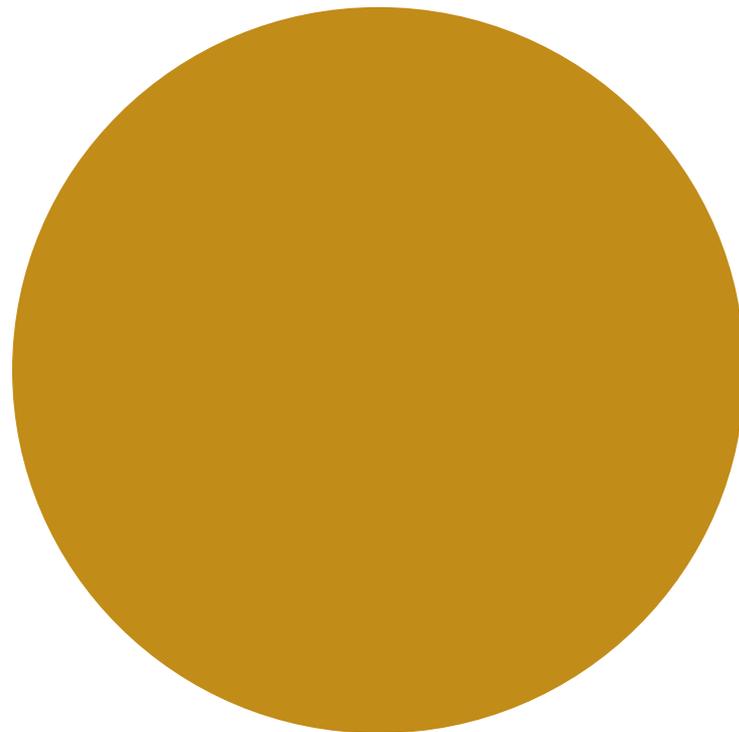
*Under existing policy, institutions that earn such incentives may not receive them due to conference authority to redirect these financial awards.



COLLEGE FOOTBALL
PLAYOFF

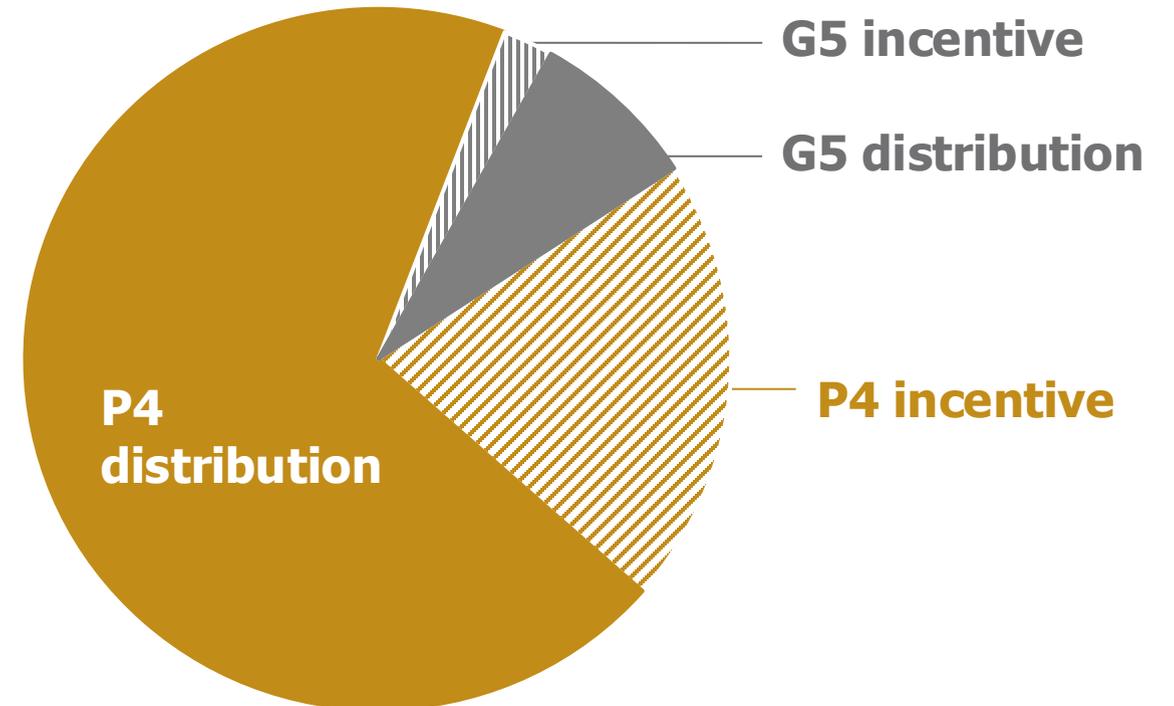
Current

0% is designated for Athlete Opportunity incentives



Proposed:

Award **23%** of the agreed-upon Power 4/G5 distribution shares for Athlete Opportunity Incentives in all sports





SANDY HATFIELD CLUBB

Managing Director for Strategic Initiatives,
Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

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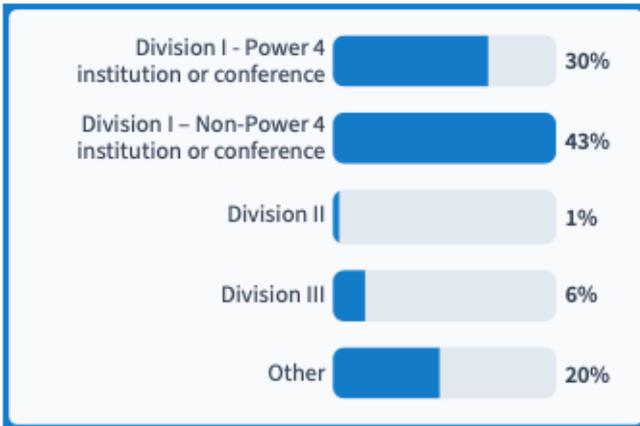
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Test question:

Which NCAA Division or Subdivision best represents your employment or area of work?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Division I - Power 4 institution or conference	38	30%
Division I - Non-Power 4 institution or conference	55	43%
Division II	1	1%
Division III	8	6%
Other	26	20%

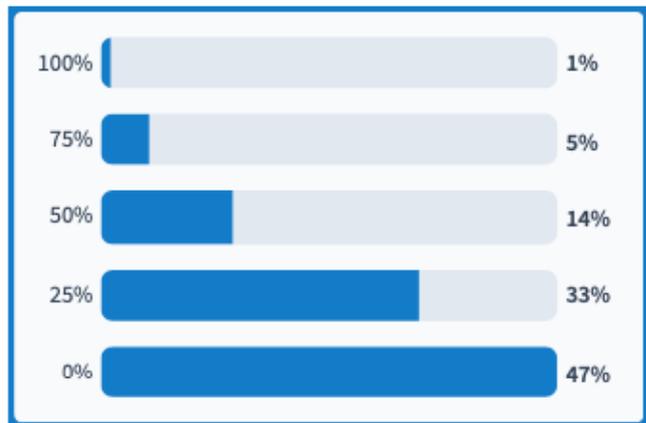
128
Responses

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Question 1:

What is your best guess on how much of the cost of the development programs for TEAM USA Olympic athletes is covered by direct funding from the U.S. government?



Response options

Count Percentage

100%

1 1%

75%

6 5%

50%

16 14%

25%

39 33%

0%

56 47%

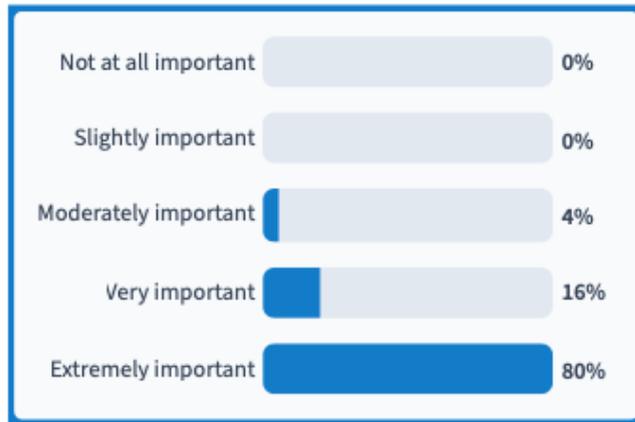
118
Responses

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Question 2:

How important is it for NCAA Division I universities to offer opportunities for students to participate in varsity sports other than those that are tied to generating revenues, like football and basketball?



Response options

Count Percentage

Not at all important

0 0%

Slightly important

0 0%

Moderately important

5 4%

Very important

19 16%

Extremely important

98 80%

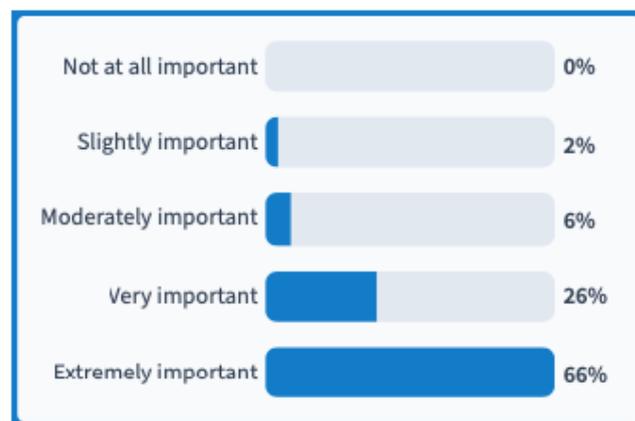
122
Responses

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Question 3:

How important do you think Power 4 college programs in Olympic sports like gymnastics, hockey, swimming, and track & field are to the success of TEAM USA in the Summer and Winter Olympic Games?



Response options

Count Percentage

Not at all important

0 0%

Slightly important

3 2%

Moderately important

7 6%

Very important

31 26%

Extremely important

80 66%

121

Responses

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Question 4:

How important do you think all non-Power 4 college programs in Olympic sports like gymnastics, hockey, swimming, and track & field are to the success of TEAM USA in the Summer and Winter Olympic Games?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0%
Slightly important	4	3%
Moderately important	23	19%
Very important	50	41%
Extremely important	45	37%

122
Responses

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Question 5:

In one word, describe the future of collegiate Olympic sports on your campus.

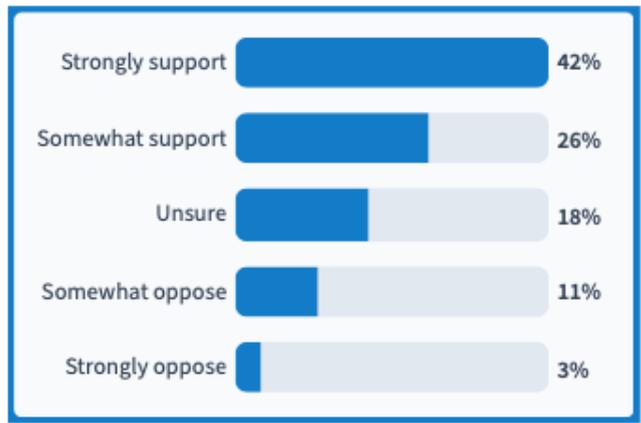
valued threatened
sports fragile strong
n/a good solid
risk uncertain
important critical
continue tenuous

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Question 6:

What is your opinion of the ICAC's proposal to codify, in any future federal law on college sports, a requirement that schools, at minimum, maintain the existing proportionate spending levels by subdivision on collegiate Olympic sports?



Response options

Count Percentage

Strongly support

49 42%

117

Somewhat support

30 26%

Responses

Unsure

21 18%

Somewhat oppose

13 11%

Strongly oppose

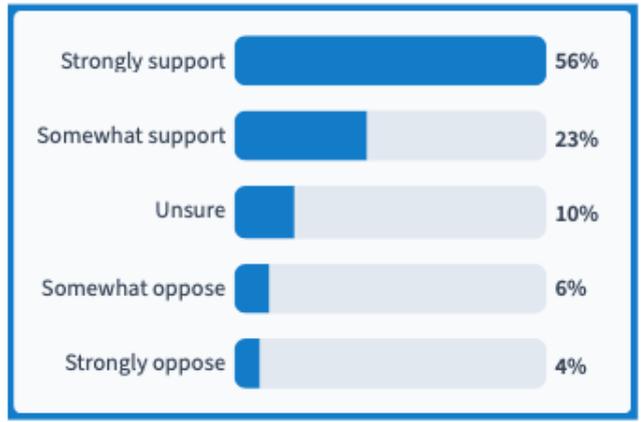
4 3%

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Question 7:

What is your opinion of the ICAC's proposal to codify, in any future federal law on college sports, the current minimum number of sports required for Division I membership as specified in NCAA Bylaw 20 (16 sports for FBS and 14 sports for non-FBS schools)



Response options

Strongly support

Somewhat support

Unsure

Somewhat oppose

Strongly oppose

Count	Percentage
64	56%
27	23%
12	10%
7	6%
5	4%

115
Responses

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Question 8:

How important is it to find legal ways to institute cost controls for the operation of collegiate Olympic sports?



Response options

Count Percentage

Not at all important

5 4%

Slightly important

10 9%

Moderately important

22 20%

Very important

46 41%

Extremely important

29 26%

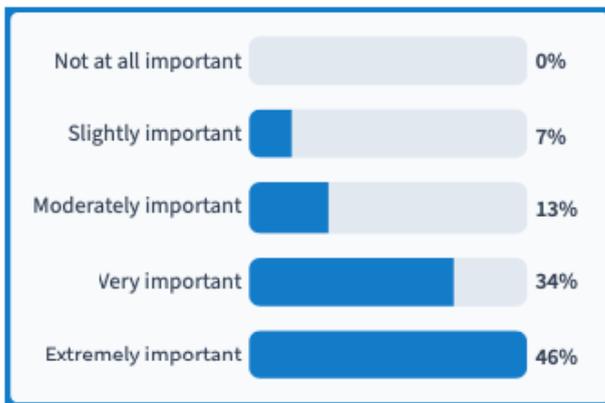
112
Responses

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Question 9:

How important is it for multisport conferences to find creative ways to regionalize regular season competition in sports other than FBS football and DI basketball to contain costs?



Response options

Count Percentage

Not at all important

0 0%

Slightly important

8 7%

Moderately important

15 13%

Very important

39 34%

Extremely important

53 46%

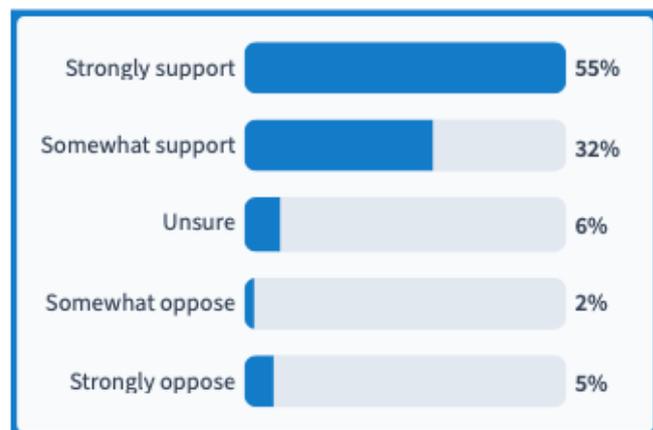
115
Responses

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Question 10:

What is your opinion of using a fee or federal tax on sports gambling operators to create a national fund to support collegiate Olympic sports that develop USA Olympic national team members?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Strongly support	62	55%
Somewhat support	36	32%
Unsure	7	6%
Somewhat oppose	2	2%
Strongly oppose	6	5%

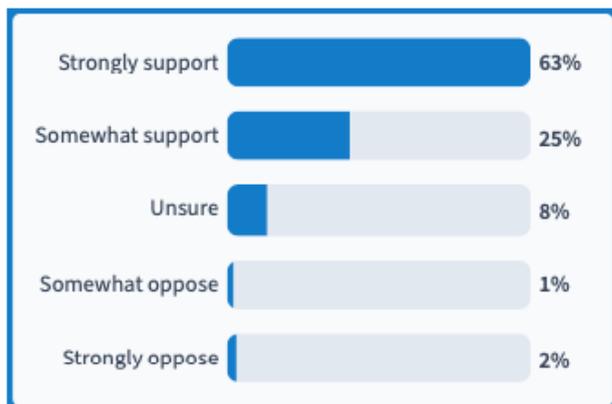
113
Responses

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Question 11:

What is your opinion of the Knight Commission proposal that the NCAA eliminates factors related to the sport of FBS football in its annual NCAA revenue distribution plan?



Response options

Count Percentage

Strongly support

55 63%

87

Responses

Somewhat support

22 25%

Unsure

7 8%

Somewhat oppose

1 1%

Strongly oppose

2 2%

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Question 12:

What is your opinion of the Knight Commission proposal for the CFP revenue distribution formula to add "opportunity incentives" that reward FBS schools for the athletics scholarships they provide in all sports, similar to the NCAA?

Response options	Count	Percentage
Strongly support	44	51%
Somewhat support	22	26%
Unsure	12	14%
Somewhat oppose	5	6%
Strongly oppose	3	3%

86
Responses

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THANK YOU

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